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TO ALL DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR POSTS COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEHTRO/AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI IMMEDIATE 9888

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 STATE 100153

SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [IR](#) [KNNP](#) [MNUC](#) [PARM](#)

SUBJECT: EXISTENCE OF A COVERT URANIUM ENRICHMENT
FACILITY IN IRAN

11. (U) This is an action request. Please see paragraph 3 for action.

12. (SBU) BACKGROUND: The United States is aware that Iran has been secretly building another enrichment facility, in addition to the one at Natanz. Some other governments are also in possession of similar information. The United States, France, and the United Kingdom briefed the IAEA on Thursday, 24 September on this facility. The United States remains committed to a diplomatic resolution of international concerns with Iran's nuclear program. These concerns are reinforced by the existence of this facility. Immediate, unconditional cooperation by Iran with the IAEA is essential to address these concerns and to ensure that a diplomatic process has a chance to succeed.

13. (U) ACTION REQUEST: Posts are requested to inform senior host government officials of the existence of a covert uranium enrichment facility in Iran using the points contained in paragraph 4. Posts are NOT authorized to provide a copy of the points. Washington understands that, in a previous iteration of this message, a non-paper was authorized. If points have already been conveyed in writing, posts are instructed to request discretion on the part of host government interlocutors. If asked about coincidental claims by an Iranian exile group of previously unknown nuclear weaponization sites, posts should convey the following, IC-cleared point:

-- We do not believe that these other sites that you refer to are the Qom enrichment site. There are many suspect sites, including these others, that we monitor.

14. (U) BEGIN TALKING POINTS:

-- We have acquired substantial, specific information that Iran has been secretly building another enrichment facility ? in addition to Natanz.

-- The facility is located near the city of Qom, Iran, and has been under construction for several years. The facility is located in an underground tunnel complex on the grounds of an Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Base.

-- Earlier this year, we developed information that gave us increased confidence that the facility was a uranium enrichment site.

-- The site is under the management of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, but unknown to all but the most senior AEOI officials.

-- The site is intended to hold approximately 3000 centrifuges but we do not know what type of centrifuge Iran intends to employ there. We assess an enrichment plant containing 3000 centrifuges is not adequate to produce regular fuel reloads for civilian nuclear power plants, which require a much larger number of centrifuges.

-- Based on our understanding of the status of the facility, we assess that Iran will not be able to begin enriching uranium there before at least 2010. Iran is continuing construction of support buildings at the facility. Intelligence indicates that earlier this year, Iran was installing the infrastructure required for centrifuges.

-- Iran may claim that this facility is for civilian nuclear fuel production. The Iranian government continues to claim that it is not pursuing a nuclear weapon. Yet this facility is too small to be viable for production of fuel for a nuclear power reactor. It may be well-suited, however, for a military purpose.

-- We are aware that some other governments are in possession of similar information.

-- We learned this week that Iran has sent the IAEA a letter indicating that it is constructing a pilot fuel enrichment facility and that the "required infrastructure has been established."

-- The letter provides no details and states that

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"further complementary information will be provided in an appropriate and due time." We assume this new enrichment facility is the facility that we and other governments have been tracking.

-- We, the UK and France have briefed the IAEA on the information that they have so that they can fully investigate the facility. The President, with his UK and French counterparts, plans to make an announcement Friday morning in Pittsburgh.

-- We firmly believe that the existence of a new centrifuge facility in Iran constitutes a serious violation of Iran's international obligations.

-- Iran was required to suspend all uranium enrichment-related activities in UN Security Council resolution [11737](#). This legally-binding requirement has been reaffirmed in three subsequent UNSC resolutions.

-- When Iran decided to build this facility, it was obligated to declare this to the IAEA. It failed to do so.

-- What is clear is that Iran once again has engaged in a deceit of the international community. The President made clear that we are serious about using diplomacy to find a negotiated solution to the Iranian nuclear program, but in order to do so, Iran needs to be transparent and truthful.

-- It is now time for Iran to prove to the international community that it is willing to play by the rules. We urge your public support on this matter as we head into the October 1 meeting with Iran.

-- It will particularly important that Iran understand that it must end the pattern of deception and once and for all commit itself to full transparency. It is time for Iran to come clean on the questions about its weaponization studies and to implement the Additional Protocol.

-- The Ministers of the P5+1 held a productive meeting on the margins of the UN General Assembly. They stated their expectation that Iran will be prepared to take constructive steps when it meets with the P5+1 on October 1st. In light of this new and troubling information, the burden is clearly on Iran to prove the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear program. It

is essential that Iran accept that the process in Geneva must be real and address their nuclear program. We are prepared to engage in a real process but will not be a party to a phony one.

-- We hope that we can count on your public support for holding Iran to its international obligations.

END TALKING POINTS

15. (U) Posts are requested to report any substantive responses. Richard Nephew (ISN/RA, 202-647-7680, NephewRM@state.sgov.gov) is the Department's POC for this cable.

16. (U) MINIMIZE CONSIDERED.
CLINTON